

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

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OUT OF THE RUT

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF.

Probably the biggest problem before the Party at the present time is how to develop the agricultural areas. An example, therefore, from a district where this work has been successfully accomplished, should convey a lesson to other places. Below will be found some suggestions which have been issued to the Local Committees in the North Norfolk Division by the Labour Agent, Mr. S. J. Gee :—

SUGGESTED AUTUMN AND WINTER PROGRAMME FOR LOCAL LABOUR PARTY

As soon as harvest is over in your district call by agenda notice (sample enclosed—500 for 8/- from this office) the members of your Committee, at which I would be pleased to attend if invited in good time. At the meeting discuss the programme (as enclosed) and fix a date for your first members' meeting. This should be restricted to paid-up members of the Party only.

Suggested Programme.

September	Committee meeting.
September	Full members' meeting.
October	Full members' meeting, followed by discussion, to be opened by lecturer (see below). (An excellent synopsis here followed.— <i>Ed. "L.O."</i>)
October	Social among paid-up members and friends.
November	Public meeting (speakers as per "Speakers' List.").
November	Full members' meeting, followed by discussion, to be opened by lecturer.
December	Christmas Party among members and friends.
January	New Year's social—see printed list of concert parties, bands, etc.
February	Public meeting — see printed list of speakers.
March	Annual meeting of Local Labour Party to which every paid-up member should be invited by notice (as enclosed) and by special

poster (as from this office). Agent will attend if desired and if notified in good time. Rural District Council elections in some parishes.

In the above admirable programme the guiding hand of the Agent is well seen. It is an admirable idea to place before the Local Committees the kind of work which might be expected to occupy them during the next sixmonths. Only too often committees meet, not only in the country, but in the towns, without any concrete suggestions before them, and hand to mouth arrangements naturally follow. Is not long continued failure sometimes due to just *one* of these hand to mouth events proving a failure? Unless a vision of the sort illustrated is put before a Party there is a risk of something being overlooked until too late. The programme given strikes us as being an excellent instance of the solicitous care which organisers ought to exercise over the activities and future work of the component parts of their Parties.—Note the number of minor services mentioned, and that they dovetail into the plan of suggestions.

The Caerphilly Divisional Labour Party Agent, Mr. Claude Denscombe, of 8, St. Fagans Street, Caerphilly, sends us quite a dainty booklet which purports to be the constitution of their Party, but which in effect turns out to be almost a local Year Book. The compilation is a 24-page pamphlet, daintily covered. It contains a list of the officers and committees, from which we note that the Caerphilly D.L.P. have a Propaganda Committee, a Finance Committee and also a "Constitution, Standing Orders, and Credential Committee." There follows the constitution of the D.L.P., which, because of its clearness, we reproduce on another page, and the constitution of the subsidiary Local Labour Party. Certain nomination forms are included, which apparently are used for nominating aspirants for

local government honours to the Local Labour Party before selection ; these forms include a declaration by the person nominated. The book includes an application for membership, Standing Orders, the dates of coming general meetings and executive meetings, and the election results of the Parliamentary Division from 1918-24, plus the names and addresses of a number of secretaries. The publication should help to maintain interest and that pride in one's Party which is a valuable asset to it.

An excellent plan directed to the creation of interest in the country places has been put into operation in the Truro Division by Mr. E. J. Alford, the Labour Agent, of 15, John Street, Truro, who our readers will remember was till recently agent in one of the Lancashire constituencies.

"Government in your own village" is the keynote of the scheme. There are approximately fifty villages in this

Division, and Mr. Alford proposes to arrange in each one a meeting for the discussion of village government. It is the creation of the village civic spirit which is aimed at in this eminently suitable area, and it is on this undeveloped force (an immensely powerful one in some countries) that Mr. Alford expects to build up a structure of conscious and useful Labour Committees.

We have made some enquiries as to the working of the scheme so far and we gather from Mr. C. C. Jones, the Labour Party District Organiser, for the area, that good progress is being made. The idea is well conveyed in the reproduction which we make below of the standard handbill which is used for calling the meetings. Our readers will be interested in the fact that Mr. F. J. Hopkins, one of the National Labour Party propagandists is the prospective Parliamentary Candidate for this Division.

GOVERNMENT

particularly as it affects the men, women,
and children of
YOUR OWN VILLAGE—STICKER.

A Meeting will be held at Mr. J. W. Bath's house, Sticker, on
Monday next, August 17th, at 7 p.m.
when the Labour Party Agent for the Penryn-Falmouth Division will speak on the
above subject.

He will deal with—

- YOUR OWN VILLAGE AFFAIRS.
- ITS AREA AND POPULATION.
- ITS RATES AND WHAT THEY DO FOR YOU.
- YOUR VOTE AND ITS USES IN—
- PARISH.
- RURAL DISTRICT.
- COUNTY.
- NATION.

Illustrations will be given of your own personal contributions to Rates and Taxes.

Although these meetings are primarily intended for members of the Labour Party, and those desiring to join the Party, a cordial welcome will be extended to any resident who desires to understand the Labour Party Constitution and Policy.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

AGENT : ED. J. ALFORD (late of Rochdale and Manchester),
13, JOHN STREET, TRURO.

"Cat Burglar Politics" is the title of an excellent and spirited plea for Socialism by Jessie Stephen, comprised in a twopenny pamphlet of attractive get-up. The photo of the writer appears on the front cover and both the contents and the appearance of this pamphlet stamp it as a good seller. Five dozen of these pamphlets could be sold at almost any good-sized meeting or demonstration, and what is more to the point, each sale should leave its mark behind it on the mind of the purchaser. We would strongly advise literature secretaries to get a supply in at once. They may be obtained from the author Miss Jessie Stephen of 107, Salehurst Road, Crofton Park, London, S.E.4, or from the printers, Mr. T. Summerbell, 10, Green Street, Sunderland.

Apropos of the article on "Propaganda Articles for the Local Press" which appears on another page from the pen of our valued contributor, Mr. Frank H. Edwards, we have had the opportunity of reading a series of persuasive articles by Mr. Edwards which appeared in the "Bury Times." Some of the subjects are "The Conduct of Trade Unionism," "Widows' Pensions," "Woman's Place in Politics," "Women in Industry," "Women in the Home," "Holidays—How to Spend Them to Advantage," and "Holidays with Pay." Even on the question of holidays Mr. Edwards manages to get in some good publicity work for some of the co-operative holiday organisations, and after making the readers of the "Bury Times" mouths water over the enjoyable outings he sketches, the writer gets home with "Holidays with Pay" at the psychological moment. The whole series is an effective contribution to the work of propaganda.

AN R.P. CIRCULAR.

Under date 14th August, the Home Office has circularised Registration Officers on various details concerning the dispatch of notices to Absent Voters, supply of lists to Record Offices, etc. There is nothing of vital interest to our readers in the circular referred to the same applying exclusively to the internal work of Registration Officers.

The Four-Figure Parties

THIS MONTH'S
NEW RECRUIT:

Coventry Labour Party

MEMBERSHIP
CAMPAIGN
Began June, 1925.

State of the Poll
August 29

1000
Members

Concerning "How to do it"
See pages 9 and 10

Our Congratulations

THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

HELP AND HINTS IN SEASON.

The Labour Party Conference at Liverpool which will take place during the currency of our present number is likely to prove one of great importance to Local Labour Parties; certainly the most important in that direction since the Conference in 1918, at which the new constitution was adopted. Since the time spoken of a wonderful development of the Labour Party has taken place in the constituencies. There are now some 3,130 Local Parties and 1,500 Women's Sections. Truly a gigantic growth in a remarkably short space of time. Obviously, such a development of the Party in the constituencies must spell change in more than one direction with conceivably a shifting of the balance of responsibility and power, financially, morally and actually. In 1918, some 170 Local Parties undertook financial responsibility for candidatures, though in the bulk of the cases the finances were feeble and the effort undeveloped. Now the financing of a candidature by a Divisional Party has become a commonplace, and an effective thing in the *majority* of cases. The check to the growth of Trades Unions due to the slump and continued and growing unemployment has directed attention to the matters we have spoken of, and the development of the Party is being looked to from membership in the constituencies rather than increased affiliations by the Unions. As with membership so with finances. The Labour Party Conference has never since 1918 fully looked the new facts in the face or devoted itself to a study of the direction in which the Party was developing. It is probable that this will be changed at the coming Conference, and that the attention of delegates will be seriously directed to what has taken place, and what is likely to take place in the future. We anticipate too that Local Labour Parties will be encouraged in the financial developments they have made, and lines may be indicated to them for their development which have in the past received mention and been advocated in these pages.

One wonders if all local officials realise the advantages to their Party of

a marked register or whether the marked register is more observed in the breach than in the observance? Organisation which is limited to the routine conduct of the Party's business, the holding of meetings and the distribution of occasional literature is simply insufficient. Real organisation must take account of the existence of an official register of the electors, and it must take account of this not only at election times but it the sense that it is the register which contains the names of those people whom one must influence and convert between elections—or fail. To suggest that one doesn't need to know more about these people than the register contains, or to record facts about the electors is simply futile. Commonsense dictates that if we know a certain fact about these voters that it should be recorded somewhere, i.e., in a marked register. Thus if one knows a certain man is a Liberal or a Tory, a Co-operator, a Trades Unionist, a Labour supporter, a voter "for" or "against," a teacher, parson or what not, then these facts once recorded, make for greater ease and effectiveness on some occasion when one desires closer communication with the person or class of person concerned. The man who decrys the necessity of keeping a marked register is either an antiquarian or a super-optimist who imagines he can make bricks without straw, otherwise that he can command votes without troubling to seek for them.

The more common objection to keeping a marked register is the supposition that some great skill is required or an immensity of labour. As a matter of fact, nothing is simpler, and if a plan has been thoroughly thought out for any constituency, proper devolution of duties makes the work of each officer quite light. One of the really essential things is that at registration time every officer responsible for an area, however large or small, should go through the register and electors' lists in order to apply their local knowledge in securing further claims (or possibly in making objections) To imagine that we can win elections if
 (See page 6).



LIBERTY

About Negro Slaves

Oh, to be a slave, and to know that Freedom lies—far off, somewhere ahead ; not too far off, neither too far ahead ! Who wouldn't chafe—and strive ?

In the American Civil War the negroes of the Southern States knew that feeling. Somewhere North they knew was Freedom—Liberty for Slaves !

But how to reach it ?

When the night was still the old negroes answered this question for their young men.

Up in the clear sky the North Star pointed.

The old men said : "Follow the North Star ! "

Hundreds, nay thousands, started out. Some were killed; some were brought back. But bravely the others followed, at night, the North Star—
and they won through !

And Wage Slaves

At the last General Election, between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 persons voted Labour, who were not Labour folk, Labour Party members, or of the Trade Unions.

Hope is the same thing—for black slave or wage slave. They were following the North Star !

But if faith fails ? What of them, and us ?

Safety First says : MAKE THEM MEMBERS.

(Continued from page 4).

we are to leave the compilation of the lists of *who shall vote* at elections entirely to the other side is a vain imagining. This little service is a routine one, but it is immensely productive.

We have on more than one occasion urged Local Parties to take steps to provide their own billposting stations. Renewed experience of billposters only makes us more convinced that sooner or later Local Parties will have to take up this matter more seriously. The extortionate rates charged by the billposting combine at election times frequently amounts to sheer piracy. It may be quite true that billposting companies have their ordinary customers to consider, but there is not the slightest justification for the doubled charges which are made for election work. Electioneers will have seriously to consider whether the publicity received by this class of advertisement is worth the expenditure. We have secured far better results ourselves from an organised system of flyposting. Even better results can be secured if there has been some foresight in this matter, and if Local Parties have laid themselves out to provide boards which may be used on members' houses and as hoardings.

We note with pleasure that the Norfolk Divisional Labour Party have a system on the above lines. The Divisional Labour Party supply the boards, and the posts for erection of hoardings, on suitable ground in any of their localities. These boards remain the property of the Divisional Party and are under their control so far as announcements placed upon the board are concerned, but the Local Party is responsible for the protection and upkeep of the board. Supplies of posters are dispatched from time to time from the central office for use on the boards, and obviously a widespread publicity is thus secured at comparatively low cost.

The Annual Conference of the National Association of Labour Registration and Election Agents is to be held at Liverpool on 28th September. The membership now reaches 200 and a particularly important agenda is to be discussed.

NEW MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGNS.

By Mrs. A. Townley.

Everyone is agreed that much of the future success of the Local Labour Parties depends on an increase in number of individual members, and, of course, the same applies to the future of the National Party.

Many Local Labour Parties knowing this have already started special campaigns for the purpose of enrolling new members.

It is also generally agreed that the very best way to organise these campaigns is to get bands of workers willing to go on to the doorstep; in some cases the known members of trades unions and Labour voters are specially concentrated upon.

This autumn many Women's Sections are, along with their Local Parties, planning these doorstep campaigns, and they are using the very excellent leaflet prepared by Head Office early in the year, and which is a really good one for the purpose.

I am enclosing one for insertion if the Editor can find room, though owing to its being folded I realise that he may only be able to reproduce the inside page. (We reproduce page 1 on opposite page, and pages 2 and 3 (reduced) on page 8.—*Editor.*)

This kind of leaflet makes the work of canvassing for new members so much easier, as the form can be left to be called for at a later visit, and we all know that the value of good canvassing depends on at least three visits, with a new message, or invitation to a meeting, each time.

October is a good time for such a canvass, as it helps to create interest in the Municipal Elections, though by the time the "L.O." is in your hands I realise that the election work will be well in hand.

So far, of course, these simple suggestions have been mainly suitable only to boroughs and small towns; one realises that the idea is not so easy for country districts where the villages and hamlets are few and far between. Still, even in these places I am inclined to agree with the writer of a letter to the "Daily Herald" the other day, that canvassing is better than occasional meetings, without the canvass to follow.



The Growth of Working Women's Organisation in The Labour Party

	Number of Individual Women Members of Labour Party.	Number of Women's Sections.	Number of Labour Votes at General Elections.
1918	20,000	200	2,244,945
1922	100,000	800	4,236,733
1923	150,000	1,000	4,348,379
1924	200,000	1,300	5,487,620

Treble Our Number This Year

PAGE 2 OF LEAFLET.

THE LABOUR PARTY STANDS FOR

1. Votes for all women and men at 21 years of age.
 2. Abolition of profiteering, and cheaper food.
 3. Full medical and nursing care for mothers and babies and provision of pure milk for all who need it.
 4. A complete system of free elementary and secondary education for all the nation's children.
 5. Pensions for widows with children and for mothers with children whose breadwinners have become incapacitated.
 6. Work or full maintenance for the unemployed.
 7. Provision of decent, comfortable homes for the people.
 8. Peace and co-operation between the peoples of the world.
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PAGE 3 OF LEAFLET.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

*As I accept the Constitution and Principles of the National Labour Party,
I apply to be enrolled as a Member of the.....*

*and promise to subscribeper annum to the Funds, and to assist
in the work of the Women's Section.*

Name (in full).....

Address

Constituency

HOW TO GET A THOUSAND MEMBERS.

One or two examples have been given in the "Labour Organiser" of Parties who by dint of organised effort have succeeded in reaching four-figure membership. A similar plan has been adopted in each case, and the basis of success appears always to be a *weekly collection* and the *appointment of collectors*.

The latest recruit to the four-figure Party is the Coventry Labour Party, which so recently as June last began a great scheme for the reorganisation and development of its individual membership. Mr. G. E. Hodgkinson, the Labour Party Agent, of 28, Much Park Street, Coventry, notified us on August 29th that the 1,000 mark had now been reached, though only a small portion of the city had yet to be covered. Our

readers will be interested to know how this was done, and we therefore print the original circular that were issued together with the canvassing slip that was used for supporters.

It will be noted from the first circular that a scheme of internal reorganisation of the wards has been coupled with this new push. Readers, however, should distinguish between these two things. It does not necessarily follow that because Coventry with its huge population has found a scheme of decentralisation a benefit the same course can be advised for other and smaller towns and places. We do, however, unhesitatingly recommend the use of the method indicated in the second circular and the adoption of the canvassing and stamp system that goes with it.

(FIRST CIRCULAR. FOR PRESENT MEMBERS).

Coventry Labour Party I.M.S.

At a General Meeting of the Individual Members' Section held April 16th, a report from the E.C. of the Party was presented, setting out a new scheme for the re-organisation of the Section. The scheme was adopted, and it was decided to supply all members of the I.M.S. and Ward Secretaries with a copy of the Draft Scheme.

At a date convenient to Ward Committees members of the I.M.S. will be convened to a meeting in the Ward in which they reside, to discuss the application of the scheme. At this meeting THREE representatives shall be appointed to attend a meeting to be held at the centre with a mandate to support the scheme or submit amendments from the Ward Committees. The General Meeting of the I.M.S. accepts the main principle of the scheme, which is to decentralise control of the Section.

The following is the Scheme submitted :—

Ward Committees shall (subject to supervision of Committee mentioned later) be given power to control membership of the I.M.S. in their particular areas.

It shall be the duty of the Ward Committees to provide facilities for collecting subscriptions, and to organise educational schemes.

The Ward Committees shall appoint one of their number to act as Sub-Agent in charge of the scheme. This appointment to be subject to Executive sanction.

There shall be set up in the centre a Supervising Committee to consist of one delegate (preferably the Sub-agent) from each Ward Committee. The Committee to meet fortnightly. The Chairman of this Committee shall be the President of the Party, and the Secretary of the Committee shall be the Party Agent.

An Educational Officer shall be appointed whose duty it will be to co-ordinate the educational activity of the Ward Committees, and to organise classes of an educational nature, and to arrange for the holding of lectures either in the Wards or at the centre.

FINANCE.

The E.C. recommends that stamps bearing the denomination of 1d. be issued to subscribers, stamps to be obtained from the central offices. The E.C. feels that as the scheme develops Ward Committees would have to meet added liabilities, and they suggest the following commission to Ward Committees, after declaring their membership.

On the basis of	240 paying members and less	25% rebate.
" "	, over 240 "	33% "

That is to say 20/- worth of stamps will be issued to Ward Committees for 15/-, according to their weekly paying membership, if 240 or less. Stamps must be paid for in advance. The Party will credit Ward Committees with 10/- worth of stamps to enable them to start the scheme.

Membership cards will be provided, a portion to be ruled out for the reception of stamps. Collecting books will be provided and Ward accounts shall be subject to audit by the Party auditors each quarter.

Index cards will be supplied from the centre for the purpose of filing the records of membership. These records shall be taken in duplicate, one set for the Ward Committees and one for the centre.

Notice will be sent in due course to all the I.M.S. of the time and place of the meeting referred to above. Yours fraternally,

ROBERT J. THOMSON, President.

GEORGE E. HODGKINSON, Secretary.

◆◆◆
(SECOND CIRCULAR. FOR SYMPATHISERS).

Coventry Labour Party

28, Much Park Street,
Coventry.

June, 1925.

TO ALL LABOUR SYMPATHISERS AND SUPPORTERS,

Nothing has been more remarkable in the History of this Country than the rapid growth and expansion of the Labour Party. Coventry has played its part in that development. In seven years the Labour vote in this constituency has increased from 10,298 in 1918, to 17,888 in 1924, truly a remarkable achievement.

All our supporters we believe are anxious to improve upon these figures.

In order to achieve this objective the Local Party has prepared a scheme whereby its members, sympathisers, and supporters, may assist with Organisation and Finance to prepare the ground for future elections and to build up a really efficient fighting machine.

The scheme will provide for a fixed and steady yearly income for the Local Labour Party at a very small sacrifice on the part of its supporters. The Party has always suffered serious disability, through lack of fighting funds, and some small financial sacrifice is absolutely necessary on the part of its supporters to enable the Party to go forward with a fair chance of success.

Owing to the widely expressed desire coming from supporters and sympathisers to take part in such a scheme, we briefly submit particulars of same, which are as follows :—

All Labour sympathisers are asked to sign their name at the bottom of this leaflet promising to pay One Penny per week to create and maintain an Organisation and Fighting Fund, to finance Labour Candidates in Coventry. Collectors will be appointed to call weekly at the homes of persons who have signed their names.

All subscribers will automatically become members of the Local Labour Party, and membership cards will be issued. Members will be entitled to attend Lectures free of charge, arranged for by the Party, and to receive the Monthly Bulletin of Information, which may lead up to the issue of a Local Weekly Paper.

Collectors who call for contributions will give special stamps as a receipt for the amount received. We specially request contributors to accept stamps in receipt for cash paid, so that the scheme may be worked on business lines. Do not hesitate to sign because the amount asked for is so small, because, if every Labour sympathiser contributed one penny per week, our financial position would be secure.

The whole of the money raised will be used locally, and all work done in connection with the scheme will be voluntary.

Please see that everyone in the house reads this circular.

Trusting you will give your support to the scheme. With thanks for all your past assistance.

ROBERT J. THOMSON, President.

GEORGE E. HODGKINSON, Secretary.

ALF. A. PURCELL, Prospective Candidate.

This portion to be called for in a few days.

Sign names below.

Amount per week promised.

1.per week
2.per week
3.per week
4.per week
5.per week

Address.....Coventry.

Coventry Labour Party 1d.					
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SHOULD WIDOWS REMAIN ON THE REGISTER.

At the recent Worcester Revision Court an interesting point was discussed.

The Conservative agent brought forward the claim of a widow. He said that the names of widows, whose husbands had died within the qualifying period were generally allowed to remain on the succeeding register by just altering the mark against the name. This was not strictly in accordance with the Act, but it had always been done up to the present moment. The canvassers had now had orders to remove these names. It was quite natural that any woman who derived her vote by virtue of her husband's qualification should lose her qualification upon the death of her husband. The matter had been often discussed and overtures had been made to the Ministry about the point. This appeal was made on compassionate grounds. Speaking as to the country generally, the agent said that it was rather the exception than the rule for these names to be removed. In the particular case at issue, he asked that the old procedure be reverted to, and that the lady's name be allowed to remain on the list.

The Registration Officer said that the authorities were against such a procedure, but if the agents would agree not to lodge formal objection, he would

agree to the procedure being adopted in the future.

The agents gave their assurance. The Registration Officer said that in the present case, it would be unfair to allow the appeal. It would not be fair to those who had already had their names removed from the list.

With the connivance of the agents, he was quite prepared to break the law on future occasions. (Laughter.)

The appeal was disallowed.

Raising Money?

We invite your enquiries for
MONEY-RAISING PRINTING.

Tickets, large or small, in books, rolls or pads. Also
Printing for Bazaars, Carnivals,
Fêtes, etc.

Order your Xmas Shoot Tickets NOW.

**The Farringdon Press, Ltd.,
SPECIALITY PRINTERS.
4 and 5 Stonecutter Street, E.C.**

PROPAGANDA ARTICLES FOR THE LOCAL PRESS.

by Frank H. Edwards,
Labour Agent, Bury.

Whenever the word "propaganda" is used the prevalent notion is that it relates to meetings, and has regard only to the exposition of our principles and policy from Labour and Socialist platforms. This is most certainly a very circumscribed view, a strictly limited interpretation. All efforts to extend a knowledge of our aims and to enthuse our supporters are useful, but those means which enable our message to reach the greatest number of people are the most effective, provided that the presentation of the case be convincing and acceptable.

GREAT MEETINGS OR EFFECTIVE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE.

The holding of great, enthusiastic well-arranged meetings is essential, and such gatherings may influence and inspire. But however large may be the audiences at such assemblies the people present are but a tithe of the population in the particular area. The great mass of the people are untouched and are, indeed, unreachable by such means. Are not such meetings for the most part gatherings of the faithful?

So far as effectiveness is concerned, that is to say the results in awakening and enlightening the people of any locality, it is arguable that the money spent on the hire of halls, the production of posters and posting, the printing of handbills, local press advertisements, and speakers' expenses, would be better spent on suitable literature and its effective distribution. All the recipients of the pamphlets or leaflets would not read the productions, but it may be granted that a far larger number of the electors would do so than are likely to attend the meetings or to peruse the reports of the speeches in the local press.

THE LOCAL PRESS.

But there is one means of reaching electors which involves no expenditure of money and which can prove most serviceable. I allude to the writing of articles for the local press. In all but a few cases this is voluntary work. It may be that the Editor will insist on some reservation to the effect that the opinions expressed in the contributions do not necessarily receive editorial endorsement. But such reservations may be the means of drawing greater attention to the articles.

WHAT AGENTS ARE ALREADY DOING.

In some places Labour Agents have made it part of their duty to contribute regular or occasional articles to the local press. Sometimes the contributions have taken the form of Labour Notes, under a number of sub-headings, and dealing mainly with matters of local interest to the Labour Movement. In other cases the articles have dealt with social questions or political issues, and an effort has been made to treat of topical items. It may take but little longer for an agent to write an article on some subject than it would to prepare notes for two or three speeches, or to deliver those addresses, but whereas his speeches will be listened to by a few score or at most a few hundreds, his article will be read by many thousands.

The important point is that local papers are well read, that they go into thousands of homes, and many of them circulate in out-of-the-way places and country districts.

A PERSONAL ALLUSION.

Perhaps an allusion to my own efforts may not be without interest. Shortly after taking up my appointment I had a controversy with the editor of the local Conservative paper respecting Nationalisation. He replied to me not in footnotes, as is customary, but in lengthy editorials. This discussion lasted for some four or five weeks, when it became inconvenient for the editor to allow of its continuance.

I was convinced that my communications were helpful and, up to a point, were welcomed by the editor. I resolved that when opportunity afforded I would write regular contributions to the local paper with a much more influential standing and a wider circulation. Now my articles are read by thousands of people whom it would be impossible to reach by public meetings or difficult to influence if we had (as for a time we did have) a local press of our own.

It has been my endeavour to deal with topical subjects or with matters of special concern, for the time being, for our Movement. For example, when the Conservatives launched their latest attack on the Political Levy, two articles appeared in successive issues under the heading of "The Attack on Trade Unionism." Following the debate in the House of Commons on "Mothers'

Run a Stationery Stall at your Bazaar.

We send you for £3, carriage paid, first-class Selling Stationery Lines to £5 retail value.

PERRY, SON & LACK, Ltd.,
Manufacturing Stationers,
20 Lowfield St., DARTFORD.

Pensions" this question was dealt with in a series of contributions, appearing in four issues. Some of the articles were cut out and passed through factories and workshops by readers who were specially interested. When the effort was being made to extend the women's membership, three articles appeared, one dealing with "Woman in Politics," another with "Woman in Industry," and the last with "Woman in the Home."

As the local annual holidays were approaching I contributed an article on "How to Spend Holidays to Advantage," and, returning after the holiday, readers were able to peruse the contribution entitled "Holidays with Pay." This last effusion arcused much interest.

OVERCOMING A DIFFICULTY.

The difficulty with many Agents is how to find time to collect data and shape it into readable contributions. However, in many places there are members of the Party who have literary ability and who would gladly undertake this work in their own names or under the cover of anonymity. The point of importance is not who does the work but that it is done and done effectively.

SOME USEFUL HINTS.

There are certain points which ought to be borne in mind. There should be a complete avoidance of acrimony. The expository style is preferable to declamation or denunciation. Articles should not be too lengthy, but whatever the length the contributions should be broken by suitable and attractive sub-headings. It should be remembered that the articles are primarily intended for those who have as yet no interest in the Labour cause, and for this reason the more varied the matter, the more direct the phrasing, the more widely read will the contributions be.

LOCAL FLAVOURING.

Above all it is desirable to give a local flavour to the articles. On the question

of the Political Levy, references to the attitude of the local M.P. or to the efforts of the local Conservative Association; in regard to Mothers' Pensions, comparisons respecting the allowances made by the local Guardians to widows and fatherless children; with regard to the status and conditions of working women, local allusions to housing and home life, to the hardships involved in married women having to do industrial work; in the matter of holidays to the fact that many of the local public employees and co-operative employees receive pay for holidays—all such local flavouring, with suitable dilations, are helpful and ensure added interest.

WHAT THE LABOUR AGENTS' ASSOCIATION MIGHT DO.

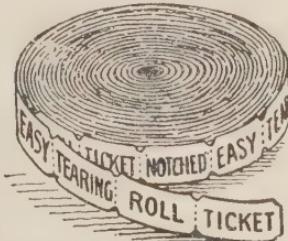
It may at some time become possible for the Labour Agents' Association to supply skeleton articles, allowing for local alterations and additions. Such a facility would be a positive advantage to Agents whose duties are so exacting that they are unable to find opportunities of writing regular articles for the local press circulating in their particular area.

ALFRED WILLIAMSON,

**North Mill Ticket Works,
ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.**

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Established 1835.

INSTRUCTIONAL LITERATURE FOR WORKERS.

The following form is used by the Birmingham Labour Party, there being corresponding forms for Ward Secretaries to send to the Divisional Secretary.

To the Ward Secretary.

POLLING DISTRICT CAPTAIN'S MONTHLY REPORT FORM.

Ward

Polling District Captain:

Polling Dist. No.

Name

.....day of

Address

Number of Members on the Books

Cash handed to the Treasurer, or

Financial Secretary of the War

NEW MEMBERS.

The following persons have signed Application for Membership form
and made first payments of amounts shown :

NAME

ADDRESS.

f s. d.

MEMBERS IN ARREARS.

The following members are more than two months in arrears:

All members have been visited for contributions this month.

Number of Streets in the Polling District

Number of Houses in the Polling District

Number of Street Captains working with me

Literature distributed during the month

Signed .

†REMARKS.

† In remarks please give report of any difficulty you have experienced, any person who should be specially visited, and particulars of persons.

A PROPAGANDIST'S PLAINT.

By Lexus.

There is a matter I wish to air, which has not received all the attention its importance deserves. I refer to the cavalier treatment meted out to propagandists by certain local Labour Parties and I.L.P. branches.

One hears a great deal about the delinquencies of certain national speakers. For instance, there appeared in the "Daily Herald" some weeks ago, an article by a propaganda secretary in which he severely slated defaulting speakers. He suggested that if legal contracts were drawn up between speakers and branches, the latter would reap a golden harvest in compensation for broken engagements.

It is true, I am afraid, that some speakers do not take their engagements too seriously, preferring, when a chance of greater self-glorification comes their way, to cancel the engagement first made and to accept the other. This is not playing the game, but I could name at least half-a-dozen speakers offhand who constantly do this sort of thing. It seems to be a matter of small moment to them that struggling organisations have been put to heavy expense in advertising them.

However, that is only one side of the case. Speakers also have just cause for complaint against propaganda secretaries, as I can personally testify. Perhaps the writer in the "Herald" was not aware of this. Hence my anxiety to enlighten him and such as he.

Twice within nine months a certain district has booked me for definite dates and twice I have received a card at very short notice—four days—cancelling the contract. The excuse, the first time was shortage of cash to carry on, a good enough one which I could appreciate. (But why the short notice which prevented me booking elsewhere?)

On the second occasion I received an urgent message asking me to book a date and help them out of a difficulty. I did so. That's the worst of being for-giving. This time I was told they had been able to book an M.P., and so I was let down once more. Brutal enough that explanation was in its frankness. Probably had I written the M.P. and explained the double game they were playing he would have refused to

appear. Some drastic treatment is required for things of this sort. I am human enough to resent being used as a reserve in case of failure to obtain someone with a bigger name.

Another time I had a definite booking for three weeks with a local Party. They found they could not fill all the dates as they had hoped, but instead of writing to me and asking the dates to be cancelled they simply ignored me. It was only when I wrote for instructions as to where I was to go that I discovered the true state of affairs. The letter of inquiry was not answered until eight days after I should have started my propaganda campaign because the secretary had very thoughtfully gone on holiday without a care in the world as to how the speaker was going to fill these three weeks.

It is fortunate for me that I happen to be a free lance journalist, and can therefore turn my time to writing when there is nothing else doing, but for a propagandist who has nothing else to run to, this would prove a serious matter. Branches have a right to keep faith with speakers whether they have big reputations or none at all. Indeed, it is safe to assert they would never think of playing up the more prominent members of the Party.

I have been treated like this at least a score and more times in the last five years, which may not seem a very high percentage, but is none the less discouraging to those endeavouring to "do their bit" for a cause which produces quite enough disappointments and discouragements without local comrades adding to them. In the whole of my experience only one branch has had the decency to pay the fee when an engagement was cancelled. That was Norwich.

Perhaps this little grumble would open the eyes of that small band of careless officials who think that speakers have no feelings. I am glad to think that they are so few, else our Movement would not grow so quickly as it has done.

WHAT THE DICKENS IS A LABOUR AGENT ANYWAY?

By J. H. ROUND, Agent at Greenwich.

"The Mid-Blankshire Divisional Labour Party invite applications for the position of Secretary and Agent. Salary according to national scale. Applicants must be able to———."

"They're off." A hundred fountain pens get busy as soon as something like this adorns the pages of the "Daily Herald," and a hundred hearts begin to throb with expectancy. Oh, to be a Labour Agent. Why it's a shame to take the money. "Applicants must be able to———." To what?

Let us try to discover some of the things a Labour Agent is expected to be and be able to perform.

The E.C. of the Mid-Blankshire Divisional Labour Party meet and wade through the applications for this coveted job. A short list is drawn up and following consultations with Mr. E.P.W. (no names—no pack drill), Mr. Right (let us hope) is appointed. The ninety and nine are then coldly informed that "the vacancy is now filled," and hopes subside until another alluring notice finds its way into the "Herald."

Mr. Right duly arrives in his corner of the vineyard and in the first week he is bound to hurt somebody's feelings, because, having met, perhaps, a few hundred of his flock, he has failed to remember the name of someone who thinks that he or she should be remembered. It is, therefore, proved for a start that he is not a Datas, and a Labour Agent should have a memory surpassing that of Macaulay.

His memory for names and faces is merely a five-finger exercise compared with the other things he will be expected to have stored in his brain case. He will be supposed to have an infallible knowledge of not only the inside of the Movement, election law, registration matters, etc., and the things that every Agent can be expected to have a grip of, but such simple matters as the Rent Acts, Unemployment and Health Insurance, Land Laws, Poor Law, County and Police Courts, Pensions, Local Government, etc., etc., *ad lib.* should be at his finger tips.

He will find that if he has not read all of the daily, weekly and monthly

journals he is regarded as being not well informed.

He must know of a thousand ways to raise money, be able to organise anything from a Derby sweep to a bazaar, be capable of producing out of nothing all manner of things from a portable platform to a capacious hall. He must have the voice of a stentor, be able to address any given number of meetings with the ability of Demosthenes, and find something fresh to say each time. He must have the patience of Job and the hide of a rhinoceros. He must keep his finger on the pulse of the political world and be able to digest Hansard daily. He must endeavour to take sleep in tabloid form and so be able to put in (if he can find them) twenty-five hours every day and do it eight days a week. If he is married his conversation with his wife must be limited to "Good morning, dear," when he goes out, and "Hello, dear, have you had supper?" when he gets back. In literary ability he must be a super Northcliffe and be able to run a buckshee newspaper on which he is the editor, business manager, reporter, advertisement canvasser, bookkeeper and office boy, and in his spare time (if any) write articles for the "Labour Organiser."

Let us hope again that it was Mr. Right who got that Blankshire job. If the salary tempted him he is not Mr. Right. If he applied because he wanted to play his part in the only fight worth while he is Mr. Right, but he will certainly need the aforementioned hide.

IS YOUR AGENT A MEMBER
of the

National Association
of Labour Registration
and Election Agents ?

(*Acts as the Trade Union
for Labour Organisers*)

General Secretary: H. DRINKWATER,
Ladywood, Fernhill Heath, near Worcester

LOCAL LABOUR PARTY RULES

Frequent requests reach us for samples of Local Labour Party Rules giving modifications or additions to the Model Rules of the Labour Party. We propose printing a few examples of such rules where successful working can be claimed, though we would once again warn enquirers that the various sets of rules compiled by the National Labour Party usually need little modification to adapt them to every condition of constituency.

Below we give the rules for the Caerphilly Divisional Labour Party—an exceptionally well-ordered constituency, where success has been continuous and increasing.

CAERPHILLY DIVISIONAL LABOUR PARTY.

CONSTITUTION.

1. The Party shall be known as the CAERPHILLY DIVISIONAL LABOUR PARTY.

2. It shall affiliate to the NATIONAL LABOUR PARTY.

3. *Objects.* To unite the forces of Labour within the Constituency, and secure the representation of Labour in Parliament, and upon all Governing Authorities.

4. *Membership.* The Party shall consist of Local Labour Parties, Affiliated Trade Union Branches, Socialist Societies, Co-operative Parliamentary and Local Representation Council, Women's Co-operative Guilds, also individuals (men and women) willing to work for the objects and subscribe to the Constitution and Principles of the Labour Party.

5. *Management.* The management of the Party shall be in the hands of an Executive Committee of not more than 30 members, exclusive of officials. The Executive shall consist of six sections, viz. :—

- (a) Representatives of Local Labour Parties.
- (b) Representatives of Trade Union Branches.
- (c) Representatives of Socialist Societies.
- (d) Representatives of the Co-operative Parliamentary and Local Representation Council.
- (e) Representative of Labour Women's Sections.
- (f) Representative of Co-operative Women's Guilds.

The basis of representation shall be—Local Labour Parties—One Member from each.

Trade Union Branches—Six Members to represent all Branches.

Socialist Societies—Two Members to represent all Societies.

Co-operative Parliamentary and Local Representation Council—Two Members to represent the Council.

Labour Women's Sections—One Member to represent all Sections.

Co-operative Women's Guilds—One Member to represent all Guilds.

The various bodies mentioned above shall, acting as groups, make their own choice of Executive Committee Members.

6. *Duties of Executive Committee.* The Executive Committee, hereinafter referred to as the E.C., shall be responsible for the general work of the Party, and shall be assisted by the Organiser and Agent in building up the organisation throughout the Division. They shall meet at least once a month, at Ystrad Mynach. At their first meeting after the Annual Conference they shall appoint the following Committees :—(1) Finance; (2) Propaganda; (3) Constitution, Standing Orders and Credential.

7. *Officers.* The Officers shall be elected at the Annual Conference from nominations previously received. They shall consist of (1) President, (2) Vice-Presidents—one for each Urban Area, (3) Organiser and Agent, (4) Treasurer.

The President shall preside at all meetings, and sign Minutes after confirmation. In his absence his place shall be taken by the Senior Vice-President. Should either President or Vice-Presidents be unable to attend, they shall immediately notify the Organiser. The President shall hold office for one year only, and shall not thereafter be eligible for two years. The retiring President shall be a member of the Executive Committee for the period until the following Annual Conference, *ex officio*.

The Senior Vice-President shall at each Annual Conference be elected President.

The Organiser and Agent shall be present at, and record Minutes of all Conferences, E.C., and Special Committee Meetings. He shall conduct all correspondence, and submit a monthly report to the E.C., and prepare an Annual Balance Sheet. He shall receive such salary as may be from time to time agreed to by Delegate Conference.

The Treasurer shall keep an account of all monies received and payments made, and submit a monthly financial statement to the E.C. and Quarterly Conference.

All monies received to be deposited with the C.W.S. Bank weekly, cheques to bear the signatures of President and Treasurer.

Auditors. There shall be two Auditors one from each Urban Area, one of whom shall be appointed yearly at Annual Conference, the Junior Auditor being considered elected the Senior as from the close of Annual Conference. They shall examine all books and vouchers appertaining to the accounts of the Party, and submit a report at such times as the Executive Committee may decide.

8. Conferences. The Annual Conference of the Party shall be held each year in July, at Ystrad Mynach, of which Conference at least 28 days' notice shall have been given, stating as far as possible the business to be transacted. Delegate Conferences shall also be held in October, January and April.

Special Conferences. These shall be convened at the discretion of the Executive Committee, or by written request to the Organiser of at least three affiliated Organisations or Local Labour Parties. At least seven days' notice of Special Conferences to be given to Societies. Basis of representation at Conferences shall be one delegate for every fifty members or part thereof.

Local Labour Party Secretaries shall be entitled to attend Conferences and E.C. Meetings in an advisory capacity, but without voting power.

Voting in all cases shall be by show of hands.

Each delegate must individually accept the Constitution of the Party, and loyally abide by the decisions of same.

9. Local Labour Parties. These shall be formed and kept in existence at convenient centres throughout the Division. They shall conform in every respect to the Local Labour Party Constitution forming part two of this booklet.

10. Finance. Affiliated Organisations shall pay fees at the rate of three-pence per member per annum, except in the case of the Co-operative Parliamentary and Local Representation Council who shall make an annual grant to the funds of the Party.

All affiliated organisations shall send their fees direct to the Organiser and Agent, who shall immediately remit 50 per cent. to the Local Labour Party concerned; fees shall be considered due and must be paid half-yearly in June and December, a month's grace being allowed in each case after which if fees remain unpaid the defaulting organisation shall not be entitled to representation at E.C. Meetings or Conferences so long as such fees remain unpaid, except in special cases of hardship which shall be considered by the Executive Committee.

Individual Members (men and women) shall pay a minimum of one penny per week, 50 per cent. of which shall be retained by the Local Labour Party, and the remaining 50 per cent. sent monthly to the Divisional Party.

Individual members over three months in arrears shall not be entitled to attend meetings or take part in the business of the Party.

11. Local Elections. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the programme and policy upon which the whole of the elections throughout the Divisions shall be fought.

Candidates for positions upon Local Governing Bodies must be members of affiliated organisations, or financial members of a Local Labour Party for at least six months before nomination, and shall carry out the procedure laid down in the Local Party Constitution, signed Form B. (as on another page of this booklet) and shall have received the endorsement of the Divisional Party.

If deemed advisable to secure co-ordination of policy on vital questions affecting the various public authorities on which Labour representatives sit, the E.C. shall be empowered to instruct the Organiser and Agent to convene a Conference of Labour Representatives

and the Officials of the Divisional Party; such Conferences shall only be called at the request of the Labour Representatives, after conferring with the E.C., through their Group Secretary.

Any group of employees in the public services shall, if they are affiliated to the Divisional Party, have the right to send a deputation to the Labour Group, after a request has been made to the E.C.

12. Parliamentary Candidates. The normal procedure with regard to a Parliamentary candidature will, when there is no special urgency, be as follows :—

- (a) If it is thought expedient to contest the constituency, the matter should be, unless time does not permit, brought before a Delegate Conference, with a view of nominations being invited.
- (b) The representatives of any affiliated Organisation, Local Labour Party, or the Divisional Executive itself, may nominate any person for consideration as Parliamentary Candidate subject to—
(i) Having obtained such person's consent.

(2) In the case of a nomination on behalf of any Organisation to having obtained the sanction of the Executive Committee thereof.

(c) The nominations so made should be laid before a specially summoned Conference of Delegates to determine which person, if any, shall be recommended to the National Labour Party Executive for approval as the Labour Candidate.

Should Candidates representing two or more organisations be nominated, a ballot of all members (affiliated and individual) shall be taken to finally select the Candidate.

(d) Where no nominations are made, or where time does not permit of formal procedure, the National Executive may take steps in consultation, and with the approval of the Divisional E.C., to secure the nomination of a Parliamentary Candidate if deemed advisable.

(e) Every Candidate must undertake to stand as "Labour" Candidate,

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independent of all other political parties.

(f) After each Parliamentary Election the Divisional Party shall nominate their Candidate as soon as possible.

13. The general provisions of the National Labour Party as stated in their Constitution and Standing Orders, shall apply to this Organisation, this shall include the Payment of Affiliation Fees, Election of Delegates to Party Conferences, Nominations for E.C., and Resolutions or Amendments for Conference Agenda.

Members of affiliated organisations claiming exemption from political contributions under the Trade Union Act of 1913, shall not be entitled to act as Delegates.

14. Any amendment, addition or alteration of this Constitution shall only take place at the Annual Conference, notice of such amendment, addition or alteration to be sent, in writing, to the Organiser and Agent, on or before the 30th April.

Constitution as amended by Annual Conference, shall take effect as from the close of Conference.

EXTRACT FROM THE DAILY HERALD.

I have been most interested in reading your letters on rural constituencies. At the present time it is utterly impossible to get an avowed adherent to Socialism in many villages in this district.

The Glastonbury Labour Party is engaged in an organised visitation of the surrounding villages. We distribute leaflets and advertise meetings and then not a soul turns up these light evenings, and yet in the same village on a winter's night we have spoken to 60 or 70 on the same spot. It would be as much as their living would be worth for it to be known that they had been to one of our meetings.

I submit that at present, one of the best methods to capture the rural areas is to get out in the villages with a good team of willing canvassers and literature, and chat and take note of likely adherents, and lay your foundation for a future organisation.

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